GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:211
ANSWERED ON:11.03.2016
Regulatory Framework for Media
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Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) the details of instances/complaints of violation of code of conduct by the media reported to the Press Council of India (PCI), News Broadcasters Association (NBA) and other regulatory bodies during the last three years and the current year along with the action taken in each of these instances;

(b) whether the Government has framed rules and regulations for effective disposal of complaints within a time-bound manner, if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government also proposes to set up an independent broadcasting media authority/separate regulatory mechanism, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the other measures taken/being taken by the Government to make the media accountable for its action/reporting instead of falling prey to paid news and unsubstantiated reporting?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE; MINISTER OF CORPORATE AFFAIRS; AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY)

(a) to (d) : A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a), (b), (c) AND (d) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 211 FOR ANSWER ON 11/03/2016

(a) The details of instances/complaints of violation of code of conduct by the media reported to the Press Council of India (PCI), News Broadcasters Association (NBA) and other regulatory bodies during the last three years and the current year with the action taken in each of the cases are as follows:
Press Council of India (PCI)- attached as annexure 'A'
Inter Ministerial Committee (IMC) - attached as annexure 'B'

<pre>
Year No. of Cases
2012-13 216
2013-14 1143
2014-15 110

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News Broadcasters' Association
(NBA) −

The details of action taken by NBSA are available at their website: http://www.nbanewdelhi.com.

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Year No. of Cases
2013 947
2014 1791
2015 2298

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Broadcasting Content Complaints Council
(BCCC) −

The details of action taken by BCCC are available at their website: http://www.ibfindia.com

(b) to (d) In so far as Print Media is concerned, Press Council of India (PCI), a statutory autonomous body was set up under the Press Council Act, 1978 to maintain and improve the standards of newspapers and news agencies in India and also to inculcate principles of self-regulation among the press. PCI, in furtherance of its objective under Section 13(2) of the Act has formulated "Norms of Journalistic Conduct" for adherence by the print media. These norms cover general principles and ethics of journalism. The complaints received by PCI against contents in the print media are adjudicated by the Council as per provisions contained in the Press Council (Procedure for Inquiry) Regulations, 1979. The complaints against any content in print media which are violative of the ethical norms of journalism, public taste or professional conduct are adjudicated by the Council in exercise of its powers provided under section 14 of the Act. As per section 14 of the Act, the Council, after holding an inquiry, may warn, admonish or censure the newspaper, the news agency, the editor or the journalist or disapprove the conduct of the editor or the journalist as the case may be.

No time limit has been prescribed for the disposal of complaints in the Press Council Act, 1978 or rules/regulations framed thereunder.

In so far as Electronic Media is concerned, the content telecast on private satellite TV channels is regulated as per provisions of the Programme and Advertising Codes prescribed under the Cable Television Network Rules, 1994 enshrined in the Cable Television Network (Regulation) Act, 1995. These codes contain a whole range of parameters to regulate programmes and advertisements on TV channels including unsubstantiated reporting. Rule 6(1) (d) of the Programme Code provides that no programme should be transmitted/re-transmitted on any cable service, which contains anything obscene, defamatory, deliberate, false and suggestive innuendos and half truths. Rule 7(10) of the Advertising Code mentions that any advertisement should be clearly distinguished from programme. Government has set up Electronic Media Monitoring Centre (EMMC) to review the content of private TV channels with reference to the violation of Programme and Advertising Codes. This was set up in 2010. An Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) has also been set up in the Ministry to look into the specific complaints or suo-motu take cognizance against the violation of Programme and Advertising Codes. Appropriate action is taken as per Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995, if any violation of the said codes is established.

As part of self-regulation, Indian Broadcasting Foundation (IBF), which is a representative body of non-news & current affairs TV channels, has set up Broadcasting Content Complaints Council (BCCC) headed by Sh. Mukul Mudgal, Retd. Judge of Hon'ble High Court to examine the complaints about television programmes. News Broadcasters Association (NBA) - a representative body of news and current affairs channels - has set up News Broadcasting Standards Authority (NBSA) to consider complaints against or in respect of broadcasters in so far as these relate to the content of any broadcast. In regard to regulation of advertisements on TV channels, Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI), a self-regulatory body of Advertisers and Advertising Agencies has set up Consumer Complaints Council (CCC) to look into complaints against advertisements.

There is no proposal under consideration of this Ministry for an independent broadcasting media authority/separate mechanism in the country in this regard, as adequate provisions in the form of various Acts / Rules / Regulations/ Guidelines already exist with regard to print and electronic Media.

To control the menace of the "Paid News", the Election Commission of India (ECI) had recommended adding "Paid News" in category of corrupt practices or electoral offences. The Commission had recommended that the provision should be made in the Representation of the People Act, 1951 to include publishing and abetting of publishing of "Paid News" for furthering the prospects of election of any candidate as an electoral offence under Chapter III of Part VII of the R.P. Act, 1951 with exemplary punishment of a minimum of two years imprisonment.

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